

East Longmeadow Planning Board

60 Center Square

East Longmeadow, Massachusetts 01028

since 1894

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Michael Carabetta, chair

Alessandro Meccia, vice-chair

Tyde Richards, clerk

George Kingston

Ralph Page

robyn d. macdonald, director

rmacdonald@eastlongmeadowma.gov

Minutes of February 24, 2015

Present were: Chair, Michael Carabetta; Vice Chair, Alessandro Meccia; George Kingston and Ralph Page. Tyde Richards was not present.

Waivers Approved

John Kelley, 15 Poplar Street – Home office

Bodacious Books and Baubles, 225 Shaker Road – Book Store

Cub Java, 10 Harris Drive – Computer programming at home via internet

The Hounds Trumpet, 48 Moore Street – Home office

Request for Signage – The Currier Group, 37A Shaker Road

The Board reviewed the proposed signage for The Currier Group, 37A Shaker Road.

Upon motion duly made by George Kingston and seconded by Ralph Page, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to approve signage as presented to be located at the customer entrance located at the side of 30-32-34 Shaker Road, the second customer entrance to 37A Prospect Street. This sign is to be considered the primary sign and will measure 29" x 76" for a total of 15.3 square feet to read "The Currier Group An affiliate of KW Pioneer Valley Keller-Williams Realty". There is an existing secondary sign for the customer entrance placed on the building located at 37A Prospect Street with a total of 6 square feet. The approval is conditioned upon the applicant obtaining a sign permit from the Building Inspector.

Sidewalk discussion

Ms. Macdonald asked the Board if they wanted to elaborate on their conversation on sidewalks. Mr. Carabetta said that he thinks they are headed in the right direction and doesn't think the current state of affairs is going to work and he can't see pushing it out for 50 years. He said that there were a lot of ideas presented at the meeting the

previous night before with the DPW and he thinks they need to start moving forward and now is the time to do something. Mr. Kingston said that if they wait 50 years to get the sidewalks done then they will have to start doing them over again and some of them on North Main Street are already in pretty poor shape. Ms. Macdonald said that they were started 25 years ago. Mr. Kingston said that he still thinks it is important for subdivisions to have the streets as complete as they can and that would include the sidewalks. He said a solution to this is putting in some way to waive it and make sure that the amount that they contribute for the waiver to the sidewalk fund would be equal to the amount they would have spent putting the sidewalks in the subdivision. Mr. Kingston said that they would have to rely on DPW to give them those numbers and it is the option of the developer as well. Mr. Kingston said that he is open to giving the Board the flexibility to doing that but he thinks they have to be very careful with the wording. Ms. Macdonald added it can't appear to be subjective.

Mr. Carabetta said that they would have to write in some default clauses because there are going to be subdivisions where some of them are going to want the sidewalks for safety and there are going to be other times one or two of them may not. He said for argument sake if they can't agree they need to have a default clause that says basically if they don't agree then the sidewalks go in. Mr. Carabetta said that the developer has the last say, it's his choice not the Board's.

Mr. Meccia said that he sees one major problem with that because no one has a definitive plan on where those sidewalks are going to go as far as the master plan. Mr. Carabetta said that he was basing it on the master plan he saw the previous night. Mr. Meccia said that has to be determined first before they can even attempt what they are doing. Mr. Kingston said that he is not sure about that because the master plan is always going to be a work in progress depending on demographics of the town. He said where people see the need may change over time pending the situations in the schools, new subdivisions could put more kids on the streets and he thinks it could change over time. Mr. Kingston said that the DPW is not committing to that sidewalk plan as stamped, signed and delivered. He said that they will never change it and they said that they would be looking at priority on a daily basis.

Mr. Page said with them not having a master plan how do they know that a subdivision that is going in isn't going to be connecting to a main sidewalk. He said unless there is a master plan that says the areas that they are putting the sidewalks in and if there is no chance ever of a sidewalk connecting to it then Mr. Kingston would be correct to have it looked at. Mr. Page said if they don't know that then they don't know where they are going to connect then put the sidewalk in the subdivision. Mr. Meccia said that was his point if they are going to require subdivisions on Prospect Street to have them and they never put a sidewalk in there it's a waste of time. Mr. Carabetta said if they put two, three or four subdivisions on Prospect Street right now there is no plan for a sidewalk on Prospect Street. He said if all the money from whatever subdivision was put that in that would pay for the sidewalk down Prospect Street. Mr. Page said then the subdivision doesn't have sidewalks and they don't connect. Mr. Carabetta said right and he isn't saying it's a perfect world but he would rather have the sidewalk on Prospect Street then in a subdivision. Ms. Macdonald said the houses in the big subdivision on Prospect Street have 5 bedrooms, kids will occupy those 5 bedrooms and will all those kids walk to the bus stop safely. Mr. Carabetta said that there is no perfect answer.

Ms. Macdonald asked the Board if they want to invite the public to see what their thoughts are in regard to whether or not they would be willing to talk about bonding or something like that and if so it would have to go to town meeting for a vote. Mr. Meccia said the only problem is that they are looking at the subdivisions they aren't looking at the road that has to be done and now is time because the rates are cheap.

Ms. Macdonald asked the Board if they want to talk to the town accountant to see what the figures are. Mr. Carabetta said that they could certainly take it upon themselves to move forward but they should have all the information before they move and thinks they should have some numbers and some language in order to discuss amongst the Board.

Mr. Page said that he doesn't see a problem inviting the public to a meeting and getting some input if anyone is willing to come. Mr. Carabetta asked if they want to do that before or after the numbers. The Board said that they would need numbers and asked Ms. Macdonald to meet with the town accountant to get them.

After further discussion the Board agreed to start with some language.

PVPC

Mr. Kingston told the Board that PVPC is sponsoring a day of training on a new kind of zoning that's called Form Based Zoning and that he will be going to training on May 26th at PVPC. Mr. Kingston said that lunch is included and it is free if you are a Planning Board member or Administrator if anyone is interested.

Meals on Wheels

Ms. Macdonald said that the Meals on Wheels is looking for volunteers to accompany the Meals on Wheels people. She said it is about an hour and half and they would ride with a specific person and deliver meals to the elderly in town. Ms. Macdonald said that it is March 16th – 20th and said that she could put their names in if they would like to volunteer and Meal on Wheels will contact them to see what day is good for them.

Zoning By-law Book

Ms. Macdonald said that she has been going through the zoning by-law book and unfortunately in the last printing she found printing errors. She said that she has also given some consideration for some new zoning by-laws and would like to invite the Zoning Review Committee to the next Planning Board Meeting to talk about what the Board wants them to start looking at. Ms. Macdonald said for example a rooming house which is not allowed in town but it doesn't specifically address that. She said that things have been coming in with regard to that happening and she thinks they need to clarify it more. Ms. Macdonald said also Mr. Kingston mentioned Air B & B and he can explain it.

Mr. Kingston said Air B & B is on the web and is a site where people can list their homes as available for rent on a short term basis, such as over night instead of a hotel. He said in his mind it's the equivalent of a motel which is not allowed in town and he thinks there are serious issues about short term rentals such as overnight rentals to

people in residential areas. Mr. Kingston said that is being done in Longmeadow without any regulation right now and he has asked their Planning Board to get back to him as to how they are planning to handle it. He said that it is something that is not going to go away it is only going to get bigger and he thinks it is something they need to think about. Mr. Kingston said do they want to allow it and if they don't how do they write the zoning by-law to prevent it and thinks it is something they can't ignore. Ms. Macdonald said that she would like the Board to have the opportunity to speak with the people on the Zoning Review Committee. She said that this will be the first town meeting since she has been with the town in eighteen years that they are not putting forth a zoning by-law change. Ms. Macdonald said there are things that need to be addressed, new uses in town because of technology and the ways things are going and asked the Board to give it some thought. Mr. Kingston said that he thinks that would be great and asked Ms. Macdonald if she can send them her thoughts on what she thinks they should be looking at so they have a chance to think about it in advance. Ms. Macdonald said that she also thinks the Big Box by-law should be clarified, it's a mess and the Zoning Review will need the Planning Board's direction on how it should be written. She said that she could invite them to their next meeting, Mr. Kingston said providing that they don't suddenly have a lot of hearings. Ms. Macdonald said that building is starting to pick up and a plan will be coming in for the new project on North Main Street next to Bentley's. She said the gas station will be under way in the spring and they may be coming back with regard to the access downstairs. She said that they think they have a co-brand that's going in there but they are not sure yet and the co-brand wanted the access to the storage facility downstairs outside and she doesn't know how that works when there is snow & ice but they may be coming back to make a change on the site plan.

With no further business and upon motion duly made by George Kingston and seconded by Ralph Page, the Board voted 4-0 to adjourn at 6:30 p.m.

For the Board,

Acting Clerk, Alessandro Meccia